

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

### **STUDY GUIDE**

A written examination for the class of **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT** to be administered in your jurisdiction will consist of approximately **120** multiple-choice questions covering the following subject areas:

#### **SUBJECT MATTER/CONTENT**

<b><u>SECTION</u></b>	<b><u>PERCENT OF EXAM</u></b>
* Filing	14%
* English Grammar, Word Usage, Punctuation, and Letter Forms	25%
* Resource Materials	8%
* Mathematics	5%
* Office Practices and Procedures	7%
* Reading Comprehension	8%
* Following Written Directions	8%
* Public Relations	8%
* Proofreading	<u>17%</u>
<b>TOTAL PERCENT</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **SAMPLE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT EXAMINATION**

##### **FILING:**

**In this type of question you are to select the name which would be filed LAST if the name were in correct alphabetical order.**

1. Ernie P. Jones
2. Ernest C. Jenkins
3. Erma T. Jones
4. Ernest G. James

The correct answer in this sample would be <u>1</u> because Ernie P. Jones would be filed last.
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This type of filing question refers to a list of items such as the one below. In order for you to answer these questions it will be advisable for you to arrange these items in alphabetical order on your scratch paper.

wedges	blocks	plates	bolts	blades
blankets	pipes	pliers	valves	cables
helmets	plasma	plaster	unions	brushes

**If the items in the above list were arranged in alphabetical order, the second item on the list would be**

1. blades.
2. blocks.
3. blankets.
4. bolts.

The correct answer would be 3 because it would be the second item on the list if the items in the above list were arranged in alphabetical order.

### **ENGLISH GRAMMAR/WORD USAGE/PUNCTUATION/LETTER FORMS**

This section includes exercises in recognizing grammatical errors, correct word usage, correct punctuation, and standard letter form and construction.

### **ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

**In the following groups of sentences, select the one sentence that is grammatically INCORRECT.**

1. The days are warm; however, the nights are cool.
2. It should be called to his attention.
3. The girl was an unusually beautiful child.
4. He performed the job easy and quick.

The correct answer would be 4 since that sentence is the only grammatically incorrect one (easy and quick should be easily and quickly - adverbs).

## **WORD USAGE**

You are offered a choice of four words to complete the sentence. Only one will complete the sentence correctly. Mark the answer sheet with the corresponding number to that correct word.

\_\_\_\_\_ of the clerks was instructed to do his own work.

1. All
2. Several
3. Some
4. Each

The correct answer would be 4 because it is the only word that will correctly complete the sentence (the subject must agree with the verb "was").

## **PUNCTUATION**

**In the following group of sentences, select the one sentence that is punctuated CORRECTLY. Mark the answer sheet with the number of that correct sentence.**

1. The student who wins first place in the essay contest will also be awarded a scholarship to the State University.
2. The student, who wins first place in the essay contest, will also be awarded a scholarship to the State University.
3. The student who wins first place in the essay contest will, also, be awarded a scholarship to the State University.
4. The student who wins first place in the essay contest will, also, be awarded a scholarship to the State University.

The correct answer would be 1 because that sentence is the one sentence that is punctuated correctly.

## **LETTER FORMS**

**The address on a No. 10 envelope should be typed**

1. 4" from the left margin and 2 1/2" from the top.
2. 3" from the left margin and 3" from the top.
3. 3" from the left margin and 2" from the top.
4. 4" from the left margin and 2" from the top.

The correct answer would be 1 because this is the acceptable placement established by the Post Office.

## **RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

This section includes questions on correct use of the telephone directory following the basic rules of alphabetizing.

### **TELEPHONE DIRECTORY**

The basic rules for alphabetizing are generally followed by the telephone companies in compiling their directories. There are however, certain exceptions that are observed in organizing the directories. These exceptions to the rules are listed below:

#### **ALPHABETIZING RULES:**

1. Names that can be spelled as either one word or two are treated as spelled by the telephone company customer. For example, "South Park" precedes "Southpark".
2. Single letters other than abbreviations are considered as separate units.
3. The letter "s" after an apostrophe is considered in alphabetizing for a directory.
4. The articles "a" or "an" are considered the same as any other word.

**Using the basic procedures for alphabetizing in connection with the rules listed above, select the answer that corresponds to the correct order in which the items would appear in the directory.**

- A. Aaron N. Smyth
- B. Aaron M. Smith
- C. Alex S. Smith

1. C, B, A
2. C, A, B
3. B, C, A
4. A, B, C

The correct answer would be 3 since the letters correspond to the correct order in which the items would appear if the basis alphabetizing procedures were followed.

## **MATHEMATICS :**

This section includes questions on basic mathematical computations.

**A department pays traveling expenses of 15 a mile for transportation, \$30.00 a night for lodging and \$15 a day for meals. How much will be paid for a 300 mile trip requiring one day and one night?**

1. \$135.00
2. \$105.00
3. \$ 90.00
4. \$ 49.50

The correct answer would be 3 as explained below:

Mileage       $300 \times \$00.15 = \$45.00$

Meals         $1 \times \$15.00 = \$15.00$

Lodging       $1 \times \$30.00 = \underline{\underline{\$30.00}}$

This amount will be paid for trip: \$90.00

## **OFFICE PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES:**

This section includes questions on proper office telephone practices, handling mail, employee relations, and other office procedure to be followed in daily operations of an office.

**When in doubt about determining which visitors should be allowed to see the Chief, what would be a good rule to follows?**

1. The Chief is a public official, so everyone should be admitted.
2. High-ranking officers should be admitted at all times.
3. Visitors who have been waiting the longest should always be admitted first.
4. When in doubt, ask the Chief if he wants to see the visitor.

The correct answer would be 4 as this is the correct rule for the office practice to be followed in this case.

## **READING COMPREHENSION:**

The Reading Comprehension items test the ability of applicants to "read, understand, and apply" written material. These items are similar in difficulty to material that must be read on the job as a Secretary to the Chief.

Below is an example of a Reading Comprehension question. Four answer choices follow the sample question. You are to select the one statement which is best supported by the paragraph using only the information provided in the paragraph. Three of the choices may or may not be correct, but the information cannot be determined as correct from reading the paragraph. The correct answer is the only statement which can be determined as correct from reading the information contained in the paragraph.

“Records of certain kinds are of vital importance to every business. Their loss by fire may mean the discontinuance of a "going" business, even though other physical property of the business can be quickly replaced. In general, it can be said that equipment designed for the protection of records from loss by fire will also be adequate against burglary.”

**According to the above quotation,**

1. equipment that is adequate to protect loss of records from fire is generally useless in prevention of burglary.
2. the loss of important records may mean that fire insurance cannot be collected.
3. the continued existence of a business may be dependent upon preventing the loss of important records by fire or from burglary.
4. business records have, in general, been very inadequately protected from loss by either fire or burglary.

The answer would be <u>3</u> because it is the statement best supported by the paragraph using only the information provided.
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## **FOLLOWING WRITTEN DIRECTIONS**

This section includes exercises in Following Written Directions. For each question you will be given specific written instructions or procedures to follow in order to complete the "task".

**This part of the test consists of a list of numbered words which you are to classify. For each word you are to mark the answer sheet as follows:**

Mark "1" if the second letter is o, and the third letter is l.

Mark "2" if the second letter is o, and the third letter is i, and the final letter is l.

Mark "3" if the second letter is not o, and the third letter is anything but i, and the fourth letter is anything but l.

Mark "4" if the word cannot be classified in any of these three categories.

**bold**  
**toil**  
**blot**

The answers would be: 1 for the first word, 2 for the second word, and 3 for the third word, as these answers correctly classify the letter arrangement for each word.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Questions in this section test your knowledge of the correct principles and practices of Public Relations to use in dealing with the public.

**Occasionally, a caller will try to obtain confidential or sensitive information from a secretary. What is the best way to handle this situation without offending the caller?**

1. "I really don't know; perhaps the Chief can tell you."
2. "I'm not allowed to give out that sort of information."
3. "I really do not appreciate your asking me that question."
4. Ignore the question.

The correct answer is 1 as you are able to handle the situation without being offensive

## **PROOFREADING**

This section includes exercises in detecting errors and/or differences between two sets of written material (an original and a copy).

**The following question consists of an original name and address in the left hand column and a copy of the address in the right hand column. You are to check the copy against the original and record your answer according to the code listed below:**

1. error in one line only.
2. error in two lines only.
3. error in all three lines.
4. no errors.

### **ORIGINAL COPY**

Prescott A. Doherty  
1101 Riverview Avenue  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Prescott A. Dougherty  
1011 Riverview Avenue  
Baton Rouge, LA 70820

The correct answer would be 3 as there are errors in all three lines of the copy when compared with the original.